

EX. 1851.214

400.A.79

FRAGMENTS

FROM THE

CRYSTAL PALACE.

BY

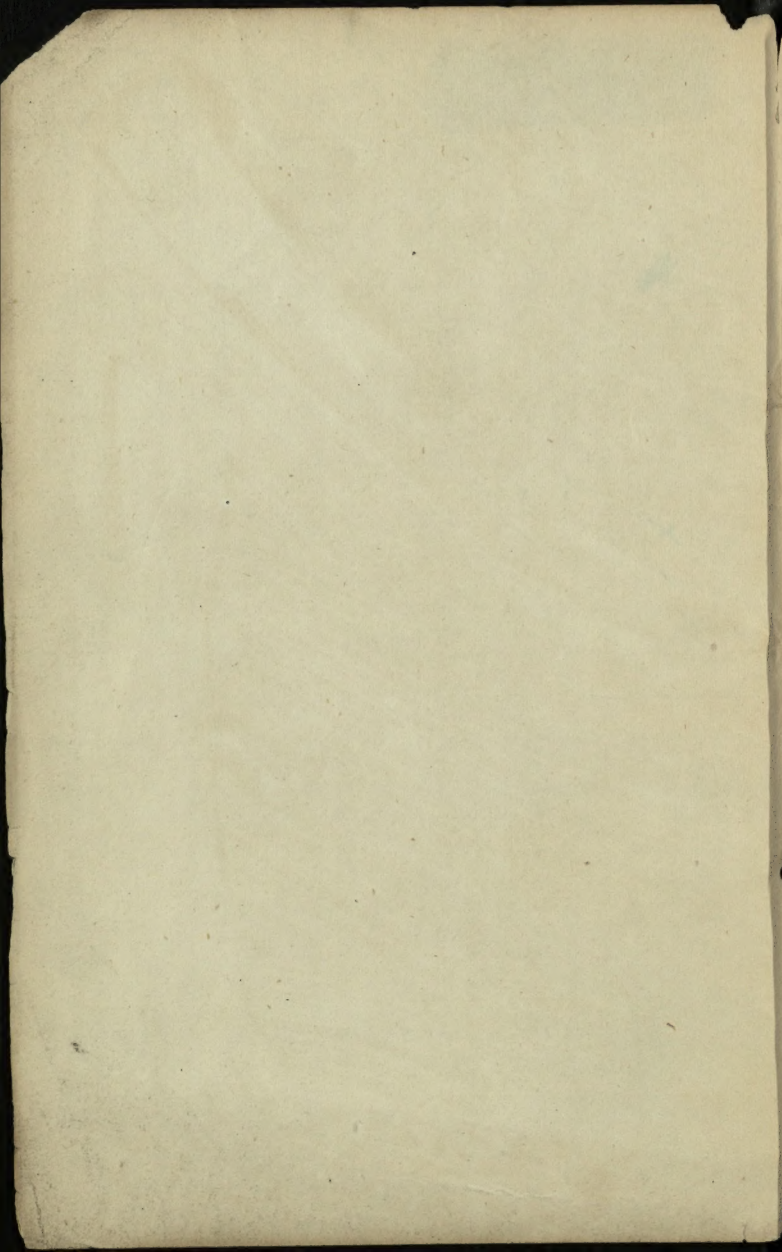
E. LEATHES.



LONDON:

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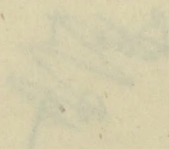
16, GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.



FRAGMENTS

HISTORICAL

CRISTAL PALACE



E. LEATHES.



HOVE & CO. PUBLISHERS

10, GREAT BURLINGTON STREET

EX. 1851. 214

~~400. A. 79~~

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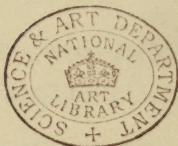
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26.11.67.

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FRAGMENTS

FROM THE

CRYSTAL PALACE.

THERE are moments of enchantment
With unfading mem'ries rife,
Through the mists of time and sorrow
Haunting all our after life !

Such was that, O Crystal Palace,
When I stood within thy walls ;
Not the first time or the second
I had sought those fairy halls.

I was there at length unfetter'd
 By communion with my kind ;
 Free to roam where fancy led me,
 With no voice my thoughts to bind.

First I paid a farewell visit
 To each treasure gather'd there ;
 Asking not, in hermit-spirit,
 One my lonely joys to share !

Dreamy Sculpture most enchain'd me,
 With her spiritual face ;
 Ling'ring long where Milan's Monti
 Veil'd his Vestal's matchless grace.

Long—yet longer stay'd my footsteps,
 Where, in shackled loveliness,
That sweet statue's voiceless pleadings
 Seem'd to ask *a world's* redress.

Hiram Powers ! if spirit-homage
 From each yearning poet-breast
 Form the living wreath of genius,
 That upon *thy brows* shall rest !

With full soul I stood enraptured,
 Gazing on the breathing stone ;
 Noble in its simple grandeur,—
 Touching in its anguish lone.

Turn'd I next where stately Russia
 Waved her eagle's jewelled wings ;
 Priceless malachite displaying,
 With her rare and lovely things.

Down the Nave, all filled with statues ;
 Greeting Prussia, Austria, France—
France, whose gorgeous Gobelin paintings
 Claim'd at least one parting glance !

Switzerland ! thy broider'd dresses,
 With the glitt'ring gems of Spain,
 And our Koh-i-Noor so precious,
 Might not then my steps detain.

Yet I linger'd where fair Pæstum
 Crown'd the blue sea's lonely strand ;
 Musing on the fallen greatness
 Of that bright Ausonian land !

Hills of Greece, so sweet and thymy ;
 Isles of the Egean waves ;
 City, whose serails the Bosphorus
 With its golden waters laves :

I could leave ye all, unweeping,
 At that Eastern shrine to bow,
 Where, enrobed in fragrant garments,
India raised her gem-wreath'd brow.

Rich and rare, O dusky Sister,

Were the off'rings thou hadst brought—
 Yet less precious than our loved ones
 Who thy distant home have sought !

Britain ! all thy varied products—

Science, manufactures, arts,
 Well might wake the proudest feelings
 Of thy loyal children's hearts !

Must I leave unsung your glories,

With a world of beauteous things,
 To whose loveliness surpassing
 Still my mem'ry fondly clings?

Dante's window—Lough's pale " Mourners"—

Sad Rimini's fated pair—
 She whose " Trust in God" beam'd sweetly
 From a face divinely fair.

Dorothea—the veil'd Circassian—

Una—and “ the Amazon”—

Wyatt's Nymphs—and that Greek Hunter,

Waking thoughts of Marathon!

Tempt me not! bright forms are flashing,

Vision-like, around me now—

I should weave a worthless garland

For a half-celestial brow.

I but speak in falt'ring accents,

When I praise some gem of art ;

Like a child, whose broken language

Paints imperfectly its heart.

Other voices—sweeter, nobler,

Shall be eloquent ere long :

Treasures, gather'd from all nations,

Must be garner'd up in song!

Crystal Palace ! thou wert lovely
 In the golden morning's prime ;
 With the sunlight on thy fountains—
 Hark ! I hear their silv'ry chime !

I am standing in the Transept,
 Where the light spray gems my brow :
 Ah ! a zephyr, ent'ring softly,
 Kisses off those tear-drops now.

Rare exotics, waving round me,
 Breathe a tale of sunnier shores ;
 Yet *thy roses*, O ! my country,
First this loving heart adores !

Look adown the wondrous structure,
 Where the chequer'd shadows play ;
 See the scatter'd groups increasing,
 Wending up the domêd way.

Yet the silence reigns unbroken,
 Save some hush'd tread passing by—
 As all hear, in vast cathedrals,
 Footfalls echoing stealthily.

Day wears on—the morning's freshness
 Fadeth into soberer hues ;
 While a strange low hum of voices
 Each aërial wave imbues.

Seek I now some loftier station,
 In this crowded solitude ;
 There to solve the deep heart-questions
 Which in such a scene intrude !

Hark ! the Sommerophone is pealing
 Forth its clear melodious blast ;
 Hark ! sweet spells of Erard's weaving,
 Now their chains around me cast !

Lift thine eyes ; for Beauty standeth,
 As a goddess, smiling near—
 Veil thy gaze ; ah ! still she charms thee,
 Like a syren, through thine ear !

Once more up that north-east gallery,
 Where in “ dim, religious light,”
 Stained glass, with quaint old story,
 Falleth, dream-like, on the sight.

Need I tell what beauteous visions
 With those changing scenes were blent ?
 Lovely landscapes, antique legends,
 Still a fresh enchantment lent.

Need I say how deep my spirit
 Drank of each new fount of joy ?
 Life *has* some few golden moments,
 Some delights which never cloy.

Many such that day gave birth to—

Pearls on thought's still length'ning string ;

Fair oases in earth's desert ;

Silver plumes for mem'ry's wing.

'Twas the hour when daylight deepens

Gently into softer eve,

When the throbbing breast seems calmer,

Though the lonely heart may grieve ;

When the *laugh of mirth* grows fainter,

Yet the *smile of peace* more sweet ;

When Love's holy bands clasp closer,

And time-sever'd spirits greet :

I had mounted where Gray's Organ,

Swell'd full-tonêd on the ear ;

And I heard its solemn music,

Like the surges, rolling near.

Far before me, in dim distance,
 Stretched that fairy-like arcade ;
 Glorious objects faintly looming,
 Through the half-mysterious shade.

Down the Nave, in constant motion,
 Poured a mighty human tide ;
 Sound of footsteps ceasing never,
 Through that temple vast and wide.

Rome ! *in war alone* thy Janus
 Oped the portals of his shrine ;
 But the fane of our Concordia
 Had a mission more divine !

There the children of all countries
 Met in peaceful rivalry ;
 Members they, though widely scatter'd,
 Of God's human family.

How describe what deep emotions

Then my musing spirit filled ?

Each immortal thought, swift-wingêd,

Some responsive heart-string thrill'd.

Clear the Past lay stretched before me,

By the Present's magic spell ;

Mighty nations, world-famed heroes,

All that Clio's scroll can tell.

Next the Future, dim and shadowy,

In her chequer'd garments rose.

Who may shun her fateful advent?

Who her dread decrees oppose ?

Yet is man a great free agent,

Working good or ill below ;

While his individual forces

Cause the social stream to flow.

Let then each one labour nobly
 In his own appointed sphere ;
 Nor despondingly look forward,
 There is *sunshine* even *here*.

Sunshine in the path of duty,
 Sunshine in our brother's weal ;
 Sunshine in the thought we're treading,
 In the footsteps of "the Leal."

Thus I ponder'd, cheer'd and tranquil,
 Till bright reveries were mine ;
 And that lovely Crystal Palace
 Seem'd with holier light to shine.

Who shall say what dreams of beauty
 Broke upon each inward sense ?
 Angel wings were waving o'er me,
 In that ecstasy intense.

And my ear caught spirit-voices,
 Chaunting lays of peace and love ;
 And my eye saw scenes celestial,
 From the seraph world above.

Yet, athwart those glorious visions,
 Rose, ere long, the mists of life ;
 And a deeper spell enthral'd me,
 With Time's sadd'ning mem'ries rife.

And the loved and lost came round me,
 With their sweet and earnest eyes ;
 Denizens of that fair country,
 Which on Heaven's border lies.

All my parted earthly treasures,
 Some that I may see no more,
 Till we walk in light together,
 On the golden Hades-shore.

Yet we ever greet Belovêd,
 In the *silent hours of sleep* ;
 And our space-defying spirits
 Hold again communion deep.

Even *day* has holy places,
 Where no more we dwell apart ;
 Fairy-halls where Love abideth,
 Haunted chambers of the heart !

Gladness is there in the knowledge,
 These undying homes will last ;
 When the pageant of life's greatness
 Shall be but a dream long past.

Yes, earth's palaces are doomêd ;
 Time his finger on them lays ;
 And Decay's cold hand for ever
 O'er the harp of glory strays.

This world's beauty hath its waning,
 Youth and strength too early fail ;
 E'en the songs that breathe of Eden
 Blend full oft with sorrow's wail.

But *our spirits* fear no boundary,
 Our *true hearts* shall outlive Time ;
 And *Love's fadeless flowers* more brightly
 Blossom in a Heav'nly clime.

O Thou Source of light eternal,
 Hear "the nations" when they pray ;
 And through life's long night of darkness
 Guide them into perfect day !

June, 1852.

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